

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119, as well as receipt from the International Bureau of a certified copy of the priority document upon which Applicants' claim for foreign priority is based. Applicants also thank the Examiner for acknowledging consideration of each of the documents listed on a Form PTO-1449 submitted with an Information Disclosure Statement on August 31, 2006. Finally, Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 10 and 11, if rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of base and any intervening claims.

In the outstanding Office Action, Figures 5A to 7C were objected-to under MPEP 608.02(g) as lacking a designation such as –Prior Art-. Claims 7-12 were objected-to for perceived informalities in claim 7. Claims 7-9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art. Claims 10 and 11 were objected-to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were otherwise indicated to be allowable if rewritten into independent form to include all of the limitations of base and any intervening claims.

Upon entry of the present amendment, Figures 5A to 7C will have been replaced with Replacement Figures 5A to 7C. Each of Replacement Figures 5A to 7C has been labeled as “Prior Art”. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to Figures 5A to 7C is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claim 7 will have been amended to eliminate the perceived informalities noted in the Office Action. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 7-12 is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the present amendment, independent claim 15 and dependent claims 16-21 will have been added for consideration. Independent claim 15 includes substantially all of the features previously recited in the combination of claim 10. Entry of claim 15 and an indication of the allowability thereof is respectfully requested, at least in view of the previous indication of the allowability of the subject matter recited in the combination of claim 10.

Dependent claims 16-19 correspond to the features of claims 8-9 and 11-12, and dependent claims 20-21 recite features to further define the predetermined distance recited in independent claim 15. Claims 16-21 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim 15, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102. In this regard, the rejection appears to be based on an incorrect inference that moving the head down at a rate of .1 mm/s, as described at p. 3, line 14 to page 4, line 3 and at page 4, lines 9-24 in the Background Art section, is the equivalent of moving the electronic component 31 down by a predetermined distance at the slower second speed. However, this portion of the Background Art section describes moving the electronic component 31 down at the slower speed (beginning prior to the electronic component 31 contacting the substrate 33), and does not include measuring the load at one or more predetermined time intervals. Accordingly, it is improper to infer that this portion of the Background Art section discloses moving the head down by a predetermined distance at the second speed before measuring the contact load. That is, although the Admitted Prior Art discloses moving the electronic component 31 down at a rate as described, the Admitted Prior Art would have to measure the load at a predetermined time interval to meet the limitation recited in claim 7 of moving the head down by a predetermined distance at a second speed.

Nevertheless, upon entry of the present amendment, claim 7 will have been amended to clarify the features of the invention to which claim 7 is directed. In particular, claim 7 has been amended to recite moving the head down by a predetermined distance at the second speed “beginning prior to the electronic component contacting the substrate”. In this regard, the Admitted Prior Art also does not disclose these features of claim 7. Rather, the Admitted Prior Art merely discloses “moving slightly and measuring the load” repeatedly after the electronic component 31 makes contact with the substrate 33, as described at page 5, lines 4-8. Accordingly, the Admitted Prior Art does not disclose the features recited in claim 7, either prior to or subsequent to entry of the present amendment.

Applicants separately traverse the rejection of claim 8. In this regard, “halting the head for a predetermined period of time” is not necessarily required in the Background Art with respect to the above-noted features of the Background, as would be required for these features of claim 8 to be inherent in the Admitted Prior Art. In fact, the features of claim 8 are specifically contrary to the description in the Background Art at p. 4, lines 9-24. In this regard, the Background Art describes problems with stopping just once when moving the head down at the second speed (beginning prior to the electronic component contacting the substrate), and does not intentionally halt the head, let alone halt the head for a predetermined period of time.

Applicants also separately traverse the rejection of claim 9. In this regard, as described above, the Background Art does not disclose moving the head down by a “predetermined distance” when moving the head down at the second speed, let alone in accordance with a target contact load as recited.

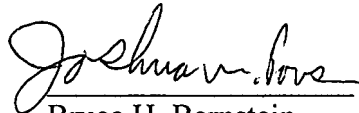
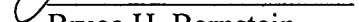
Therefore, claims 7, 8 and 9 are each separately allowable over the Admitted Prior Art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of each of these claims.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 13 and 14 will have been added to further define the predetermined distance recited in independent claim 7. Claims 8-14 are allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim 7, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

The amendments to the claims made in this amendment have not been made to overcome the prior art, and thus, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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August 8, 2007
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